



Monroe County, Florida

1999 ANNUAL REPORT



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As the county produces this first annual report, I look back with pride. The debate on tourism has led to more tourist bed tax dollars spent on infrastructure and local projects and better tourism planning. We have made real progress on cleaning up wastewater, established parks in every area of the Keys, protected residential communities from commercial activities, promoted the arts industry and opened the state and federal purses wider for the benefit of Monroe County.

We have adopted a comprehensive land use plan and rate of growth ordinance and have developed a professional county government staff that is responsive to the needs of the community while streamlining services and cutting costs.

My goals for the future are to continue pursuing the goals I established for my first two terms: to protect and enhance the economy, the environment and the quality of life of our citizens.

Mayor Freeman received both a bachelor's degree of sociology and government and master's of education from the University of Arkansas and a doctor of philosophy in education administration from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. She was an elementary school teacher in



Mayor Shirley Freeman
District 3

Arkansas and principal of the American School in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. She served eight years as elementary school principal in Key West and 12 years as a district administrator for the Monroe County School Board. She has held the post of county commissioner since 1992 and served as mayor from 1994 to 1996 and from 1999 to present.

Mayor Freeman is an emeritus member of the Florida Board of Bar Examiners, past chairman of the Dade-Monroe Mental Health and Drug Abuse Planning Council, and former trustee of the Florida Keys Community College. She was a charter member and helped found three Keys organizations: the Florida Keys League of Women Voters, the local branch of the

American Association of University Women, and the Zonta Club of Key West. She is a member of the Key West Woman's Club, Reef Relief, and the Monroe Council of the Arts. She is a life member of the Salvation Army Advisory Board and an honorary member of the Marathon Rotary Club. She represents the Board of County Commissioners on the Tourist Development Council and the South Florida Regional Planning Council.

During the past year, there was an awakening in the Florida Keys for the better. Residents and visitors seem to better appreciate the value of our waters and our environment. The Department of Community Affairs seems to recognize that some of its directions have been too harsh. Some of our critics have forgotten that the five Monroe County commissions I have served on have divested some of their powers to Middle and Upper Keys. Cities may even improve this.

The state of Florida has begun buying more and more land for parks, and Monroe County is a beneficiary. We are focused on making our ever-increasing parks scenic and safe.

Monroe County's challenges for the coming year include obtaining funds for sewerage systems, making sure the county is protected in the event of a hurricane, opening up the lines of communication between the county and the new cities within the county, and exploring the possibilities of Cuban relations.

Commissioner Harvey received her bachelor's degree in education from Florida State University and her master's in administration from Nova University. Active in public service for many years, she was a



Mayor Emeritus and Commissioner Wilhelmina Harvey
District 1

member of the Monroe County School Board for eight years, has served five terms on the Monroe County commission and was the first female county commissioner and county mayor. Before her political career, Harvey was a teacher in both the local schools and the community college. She was one of three of the first living women named to the state of Florida's "Women's Hall of Fame." She is a recipient of the Athena Award by the Key West Chamber of Commerce and has been recognized for her many achievements as an outstanding woman in the Marquis "Who's Who," not only in America but internationally.

Commissioner Harvey is involved in many activities such as the Key West Woman's Club, Zonta Club of Key West, Non-Commissioned Officers of America,

Academy of Achievers by the Heart Association of Key West, Beta Sigma Phi, Business and Professional Women's Club, Florida Federation Business and Professional Women's Club State President, American Legion Auxiliary, Friends of Fort Zachary Taylor, the Political Action Women's Club, the American Association of University Women, the Greater Key West Chamber of Commerce and the Kiwanis Club of the Upper Keys.



Monroe County is currently in the process of downsizing, and I predict that the incorporation trend will continue. The county is so diversified and so different that each and every island in the chain is faced with different needs. When the county's population was smaller, it was easy to run a county form of government. As the population has increased, it has become more and more evident that smaller municipalities might be the answer.

People perceive a closer access to their government through municipalities. In a municipal government, the leaders are responsible only to the people in that municipality. As a county commission, we not only have to listen to our area's concerns but we have to present those considerations to the other four districts. When we make a decision, it affects the entire county.

By having to deal only with representatives of the municipalities instead of 85,000 residents, the role of the county commission would be made much easier. I have supported the incorporations and think getting back to grassroots government is long overdue.

I believe we will see the Big Pine area and Lower Keys incorporate next year. They have done their homework and are very close to having their charters established. I believe that after a few years, taxes will go down for these municipalities and they will begin to receive their fair share of revenues.

Our waiting list for services has been cut dramatically. I am very proud that we received most of the funding for our elderly during a time when many budgets are being cut. Our veterans' programs are in great shape. We are in the process of getting new vans to transport



Commissioner Mary Kay Reich
District 5

veterans to the new clinic in Key West.

It looks as if we are finally going to open a new school in Key Largo. The school board and the county commission worked wonderfully together. I am very grateful that we were able to get a sales tax passed.

For the future of our county, I would like to see government downsizing continue. I would like to see the schools set up the way they should be and would like to see the commission work with them. I want to see the parks really up and running, particularly the one in Marathon. I want better facilities for our elderly people. I would like to see the sheriff acquire the old Mariner's Hospital building and move our health department to decent quarters.

Finally, fiscal responsibility is my primary concern as county commissioner so I would like to see some solid fiscal change in Monroe County.

Commissioner Reich owned and operated a charter boat business with her husband Richard until 1978 and owned Anchor Isle Realty in Islamorada. She sold the business in 1987 and was appointed to a four-year term on the Monroe County Planning Commission.

Commissioner Reich was elected as county commissioner of District Five in 1992 and is now serving her second term. She is active in many organizations such as the Florida Association of Counties, the National Association of Counties, the Rural Health Network, the Alliance for Aging, the Criminal Justice Committee, the Domestic Abuse Shelter, the Healthy Start Coalition, the Value Adjustment Board, the Veterans Council, and the Substance Abuse Committee.





My goals, as promised, have always been to make myself readily available and responsive to constituent needs. This job has taken me many miles throughout the Keys, from Loop Road to Tallahassee and from Key West to Washington, DC, then more specifically throughout District Two, where I have been attending to requests and needs that have been overlooked for too long.

Shortly after I became commissioner, the District Two office was relocated as promised to Big Pine Key. I believe giving better service such as this is just one of many steps needed to re-establish trust in county government. Being available and responsive to constituent needs makes us better representatives and gives our constituents a feeling of getting what they pay for in taxes. That's not only fair, but the right thing to do.

With the possibility of future incorporations and the newly incorporated City of Marathon and Village of Islamorada, this commission should clearly be directing and redefining county government. With a 35 percent loss of tax base for municipal services, it becomes obligatory to downsize and remove unnecessary expense of operations to the unincorporated areas.

Contrary to the negativism directed toward county government, we should give credit to (mistakes excepted) past commissions that have accomplished many tasks under difficult circumstances. It would be unfair to criticize past commissions while not recognizing their accomplishments. To transcend from a sleepy fishing area "for the guys" into an internationally renowned tourist area with more than 3 million visitors a year, in less than 15 years, was without question a difficult and arduous task.

One of my first jobs as a county commissioner was to report to the governor of Florida and his cabinet on Monroe County's progress for the first two years of its comprehensive work plan. I had only been in office for two months when I appeared in Tallahassee to report that we had made little or no progress, and I promised the governor that when I appeared before the cabinet the next time, Monroe County would have a different story to tell. Now, a year later, we are on track to complete every task required from the county in year three, and our accomplishments this year, on the issue of wastewater alone, have been remarkable.

In the future, I hope our county is a smaller, more efficient, more flexible, more responsive county government that works in partnership with the people of the county and the various municipal governments to create a future that both embraces our common goals and respects the differences that separate us. Clearly,



Commissioner George Neugent
District 2

reduction as stated in the county's five-year plan.

Commissioner Neugent received an associate degree in petroleum drilling and production technology from Nicholls State University. He was an engineer for many years, specializing in fighting oil well fires. He has been a resident of the Florida Keys for 15 years and currently owns Porky's Bayside Restaurant and 53rd Street Dock and Deli in Marathon.

His community involvement includes serving as chair of the Florida Keys Marine Sanctuary Advisory Committee, secretary/treasurer of the Pigeon Key Foundation, vice president of the Marathon Economic Development Council, and president of the Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce. He was instrumental in establishing COMMIT, which is an activist group for Marathon Schools, and Friends of Marathon Parks. In 1996, he was named Person of the Year by the Marathon Jaycees, and in 1998, Most Community Involved by WAVK Radio.



Commissioner Nora Williams
District 4

a crucial part of the future must be a respect and responsibility for enhancing and preserving our natural environment and the quality of life in the Keys that we all so cherish.

Commissioner Williams received a bachelor's degree in politics from Princeton University, a master's degree in religion from Harvard University, and a Mellon Fellowship from John Hopkins University.

A resident of the Florida Keys since 1989, Williams was president of Keys Entertainment and Advertising, a public relations firm specializing in education campaigns, video production and internet design from 1992 until 1998.

Williams was elected county commissioner in 1998. She serves as the land use liaison to the South Florida Water Management District, the representative to the water quality steering committee, and to the Governor's Commission for the Everglades.



To the Citizens of Monroe County

by James L. Roberts
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

As we completed the drafts for this first annual report to the citizens of Monroe County, one overall theme became apparent: as Monroe County struggles with the major issues it is facing (incorporations, tourism, wastewater facilities, vacation rentals, etc.), the great majority of county services continue to be delivered efficiently and effectively. Every day, the county residents receive a wide variety of public services that are not affected by the controversies that surround us or the headlines in the newspapers.

That is the mission of the Monroe County administration. It is our job to deliver the services and implement the programs determined by the Board of County Commissioners to be in the best interests of the citizens. County employees do an admirable job of delivering such services on a continuing basis. We are not perfect, but we are dedicated to doing a quality job for our neighbors and our community.

Why do the county employees provide such excellent service? It is primarily because they are not only employees of the county,



but also taxpayers in the community, recipients of the services themselves, and neighbors who are privileged to live in the Keys. They are working for themselves, their families and their communities whenever they are working for the county.

All county employees pledge to continue their commitment to providing quality services in the most economic, efficient, and effective manner. We strive to improve where improvement is needed. We are certainly looking to make changes where necessary and appropriate.

We hope you find this first annual report informative and enjoyable and we welcome suggestions for how to improve it in the future.

James L. Roberts has been Monroe County Administrator since 1993. He received a bachelor's degree in government from Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and a master of public administration from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Rutherford, New Jersey. Roberts' past positions include Borough Administrator for Mountainside in Union County, New Jersey; Director for the Department of Public Services and Executive Director of Code Enforcement, Town of Morristown, New Jersey; Director of Community Research and Development, Executive Director of Housing Authority for the County of Morris, New Jersey; and Assistant Director, Morris County Planning Board, Morristown, New Jersey. He is a past member of the American Society for Public Administration and the American Institute of Planners. He is individually, or through Monroe County, a member or participant in the Florida Association of Counties, National Association of Counties, Florida City and County Management Association, and the International City/County Management Association.



Residents and visitors entering Monroe County from mainland Florida via Card Sound Road.



MONROE COUNTY STATISTICS (1999)

Monroe County is a county of islands stretching southwest from the southeastern tip of the Florida mainland to the Dry Tortugas for more than 220 miles. The county is made up of more than 1,500 islands, although only about 30 are inhabited, and is comprised of 1,875 square miles. The mainland section of the county includes part of the Everglades National Park and the Big Cypress National Preserve and is mostly uninhabited.

The 1990 United States Census shows a total population of 79,435. In 1998, the population was estimated at 85,000.

POPULATION:

UPPER KEYS:

Key Largo 11,336
Tavernier 2,433
Plantation 4,405
Islamorada 1,220
remainder of Upper Keys 2,662

MIDDLE KEYS:

Layton 183
Key Colony Beach 977
Marathon 8,857
remainder of Middle Keys 2,775

LOWER KEYS:

Big Pine 4,206
Cudjoe 1,714
remainder of Lower Keys 4,485

KEY WEST:

City of Key West 24,832
Big Coppitt 2,388
Stock Island 3,613
remainder of Key West 1,646
Cape Sable/outlying islands 292
Ships at sea 1,749

MAJOR INDUSTRIES:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Tourism | 3. Commercial Fishing |
| 2. Retail Services | 4. Government |

FACTS AND STATS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest cost of living in Florida • Ranks fifth in per capita income in the state • Highest rents in the state, average \$888 • Average home purchase price in 1997: \$150,446 • Annual budget: \$240 million | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households: 36,460 • Number of licensed hotel/motel units: 13,990 • Total school population: 10,828 • Number of county parks and recreation facilities: 41 • 43 bridges connect 46 Keys for a total of 19.39 miles |
|---|--|

Sources:

1990 Monroe County Statistical Abstract
1990 U.S. Census
1999 Florida Statistical Abstract
1993 Monroe County Comprehensive Plan

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
Final Management Plan, Vol. 1
1999 Monroe County Public Facilities Capacity Assessment
1997 Bureau of Economic and Business Research,
Monroe County Perspective





A History of Monroe County

by Tom and Lynda Hambright
MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY

Photo: The Boca Chica bridge on the first highway opened in 1928.

Monroe County, the sixth county in Florida, was established by an act of the territorial legislature on July 2, 1823, which was signed by Governor William P. Duval on July 3, 1823. The county was named for President James Monroe.

The original boundaries of the county included the southern part of Florida and were described as “all that land lying south of a line commencing at Boca Gasparilla River on the Gulf of Mexico, and extending up to the northern margin of Charlotte Harbor to the north of Charlotte River; thence up the northern margin of that river to Lake Macaco (as Lake Okeechobee was then named); thence along the northern margin of that lake to its most eastern limits; thence in a direct line to the headwaters of the Potomas river; thence down that river to its entrance into the ocean, together with all the Keys and islands of the Cape of Florida.” Other counties formed from the original boundaries are: Dade, Broward, Collier, Lee, Henry and parts of Charlotte, Glades, and Palm Beach.



Post Office at Planter on Key Largo,
approximately 1880.

The City of Key West, which had been named county seat, was incorporated on January 8, 1828. A county courthouse was erected at Jackson Square in Key West before the city was surveyed. By 1830, the population had grown to 517 persons, almost all living in Key West. The main industries were salvaging shipwrecks on the reef and catching live fish for the Havana market.

In February 1836, Dade County was established with Indian Key as county seat. The southern boundary "commenced at the western end of Bahia Honda and ran in a direct line to Cape Sable; thence in a direct line to Lake Okeechobee," thus cutting off from Monroe County all the Keys to the east and north of Bahia Honda and all the eastern portions of southern mainland Florida.

On October 11, 1846, a major hurricane struck Key West. The storm damaged or destroyed every building in town and destroyed the stone lighthouses at Key West and Sand Key. The city was able to rapidly rebuild because of a strong economy created by the wrecking industry.

The boundaries were changed again in 1859 when part of the county was cut to form the southern part of the new Manatee County. This area would later be part of Charlotte County.

During the Civil War, Key West and Monroe County were the only southern governments to remain in the Union throughout the war. As a result of the war time population increase, Key West



became the largest city in Florida. The population of the county in 1870 was 5,657, and all but 641 lived in Key West.

By an act of the legislature in 1866, the northern boundaries were changed again giving the county all the Keys from Key Largo south. The southwest part of the mainland remained in Monroe County.

On August 12, 1885, the town of Fort Myers was incorporated making it the second town in the county. On May 13, 1887, Lee County was created out of the northwestern part of the county. This is the boundary still in use as the dividing line between Monroe and Collier counties, which was created out of the southern part of Lee County.

After the Civil War, the first significant settlements developed on the Upper Keys growing pineapples and winter vegetables. The farming was mostly on Key Largo, Plantation Key and Upper and Lower Matecumbe Keys. A large Cuban refugee influx in the 1870s and 1880s fueled a population increase and by 1890 Key West was again the largest city in Florida with a population of 18,080. Population of the rest of the county, even with the farming, was only 706.

Cuban hand-rolled cigars became the major industry in the last 30 years of the century. Wrecking was a dying industry as new lighthouses were built on the reef. A



The *USS Bushnell* and submarines
at the Naval Station in the 1960s.



Building the highway over the railroad bridge, 1935.

At the same time, Dade County built a road from Homestead to Key Largo via the Card Sound Bridge. Additional county bonds and construction projects were authorized between 1923 and 1928 for road work and auto ferries. The first highway with auto ferries opened on January 25, 1928.

The new century brought a series of destructive hurricanes. The first struck during October 17 and 18, 1906, causing major damage to the work completed on the railroad on the Upper Keys with at least 193 deaths, most of whom were railroad workers. The Keys were struck by a major storm on October 11, 1909, which caused

strong maritime industry remained supported by fishing, turtling, shipping and sponging.

Disaster struck Key West on April 1, 1886, when a fire burned out of control for 12 hours destroying downtown including most of the cigar factories. The damage was estimated at more than \$2 million dollars. The strong economy again allowed a rapid recovery. As a result of the fire, Monroe County funded a fire station at Jackson Square to augment the Key West Fire Department.

The first jail was built in 1832 and was replaced in 1845, which was replaced in turn in 1880. A new courthouse was dedicated in 1890. All these were located at Jackson Square.

The population and physical characteristics of the Keys were forever changed by Henry Flagler's decision in 1905 to build the railroad to Key West. The railroad would reach Marathon in 1908, which would be the terminus and port for sailing to Havana until 1912 when Henry Flagler would see his dream come true and ride into Key West on the first train. The population of the county in 1910 reached a high of 21,563 of which 19,945 lived in Key West.

In 1917, Monroe County issued the first bond to build single lane dirt roads on Key Largo and Big Pine Key, and a bridge to Stock Island with a short road. In 1922, another county bond was issued to build a road from Key Largo to Lower Matecumbe.

major damage in Key West. The next year on October 17 and 18 another storm passed near Key West with less damage. The "Great Hurricane" of 1919 passed west of Key West on September 9 and 10 causing serious damage in the city. The greatest tragedy was the loss of the Spanish ship *Valbanera* 40 miles west of Key West. More than 500 passengers and crew died when the ship sank.

The highway and railroad did not bring the hoped for prosperity. Keys farming failed from disease and increased competition from mainland and overseas farms. The cigar industry disappeared as American's taste changed to cigarettes. The Great Depression destroyed the rest of the economy. By 1930, the county's population dropped to 13,624, of which 12,831 lived in Key West.

The federal government took control of the bankrupt Monroe County and Key West governments during the Great Depression



The Ruy Lopez Cigar Factory before and after the 1909 hurricane.



The Monroe County Fire Company
behind the courthouse on Whitehead
Street, circa 1910.

and began to develop a tourist economy. The Hurricane of 1935, which struck the Middle and Upper Keys, caused massive destruction with more than 400 dead and part of the railroad destroyed. The railroad did not rebuild. The federal and state governments built a new highway to Key West using the railroad bridges to eliminate the auto ferries.

World War II revitalized the economy and made Key West a major military base that would remain after the war. Of all the war construction, the most lasting impact was the waterline from Florida City to Key West. This solved the age-old problem of a plentiful supply of fresh water. In 1967, a desalinization plant was added to augment the pipeline.

The discovery of the rich shrimp beds in 1949 and a growing tourist industry, aided by President Truman's visits to Key West, added to an already booming military economy. In 1950, the population reached a new high of 29,957, of which 26,433 lived in Key West. In 1960, Key West reached an all time high population of 33,956 with 13,965 residents in the rest of the county.

The growing tourist economy, increased availability of electricity and air conditioning and a reliable supply of fresh water led to explosive growth in the Florida Keys during the 1950s and through the 1970s. The census of 1980 shows the population of Monroe County, outside of Key West reached 38,806, which for the first time was more than the Southernmost City.

Key West's population dropped to 24,832 as a result of military cuts in the 1970s. To meet the needs of the changing population, Monroe County dedicated courthouses at

1,500 acres near the intersection of Card Sound Bridge and Ocean Reef Road and planned to build a city. The officers of the real estate firm served as mayor and councilmen for the city. The only official action taken by the city was to arrange a bond issue to build the new Card Sound Bridge in 1960. The city remained on the books until the early 1980s when the state bought part of the land and the Florida legislature revoked the charter.

Two cities created during this time still remain and one was overturned by court order. The City of Key Colony Beach was formed when the 11 qualified voters met on September 24, 1957 and unanimously approved incorporation and elected F.P. Sadowski mayor. The City of Layton was created on September 18,



Duval Street, corner of Greene Street around 1910.



The train crossing the Seven Mile Bridge in the 1920s.

1963 when all 25 residents gathered at the Little Italy Restaurant and voted to incorporate. They also voted 25-0 to name Del Layton mayor. The City of Stock Island was formed when the voters overwhelmingly approved incorporation in a special election on July 30, 1963. A total of 92 votes were cast. At the same time a city council was elected which in turn elected one of its members, Jesse Slone, mayor. On March 26, 1964, the short life of the City of Stock Island ended when Circuit Judge Aquilino Lopez, Jr. signed an order stating that the referendum by which the city was established was not properly conducted.

The post-war years again saw hurricanes cause problems in the Keys. In 1948, the Keys were hit with two storms. The first, a category three storm, struck on September 21 and 22. A smaller storm followed on October 5. On September 10, 1960, Hurricane Donna swept over the Middle Keys causing major damage in

Marathon and the Upper Keys. Hurricane Betsy passed over the Upper Keys on September 8, 1965. The worst damage was caused by tides as much as nine feet above normal.

In 1977, Congress appropriated \$109 million to build new bridges to replace the old railroad bridges. With additional money from the state, the new highway was completed in 1982. The highway to the mainland now has 43 bridges which have a total of 19.39 miles.

In the early 1980s, the old Navy waterline and desalinization plant could no longer meet the demand for fresh water. The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority constructed a large new transmission pipeline that was completed in 1982.

The continued growth of the Keys led the state of Florida to declare the Keys an "Area of Critical State Concern" in 1975. This led to the county adoption of a land use plan and a policy of reduced growth and greater preservation. To handle an increasing number of employees, the county acquired the old Monroe County General Hospital on Stock Island for offices.

The 1980s and '90s saw a large number of Cuban refugees landing in the Keys. During the spring and summer of 1980 more than 130,000 landed in the Keys



Woodburn's General Store in Marathon in the early 1930s.



Jewfish Creek Bridge in the 1950s.

from Mariel, Cuba. The adverse publicity caused a serious decrease in the number of tourists in the early 1980s. As a result of the refugee crisis, the federal government established a road block on the mainland, forcing all Monroe County citizens to prove they were American citizens in order to leave the county. To counter the massive traffic jams that were destroying the tourist trade, the mythical Conch Republic was created and the publicity forced the government to do what could not be done in court, remove the road block.

With new bridges and a water pipeline, the population of the Keys continued to grow. The 1990 United States Census shows a total population of 79,435.

The increasing size of government created a demand for more



Major hurricanes again visited the Keys in the 1990s. On August 24, 1992, Hurricane Andrew struck Dade County causing damage on Upper Key Largo primarily to Ocean Reef. On September 25, 1998, Hurricane Georges swept over the Keys causing serious damage in the Middle and Lower Keys. On November 4, Tropical Storm Mitch moved quickly through the Upper Keys causing isolated damage.

In the 1990s, the changing population and a desire for local control led to more cities incorporating. On November 5, 1997, Islamorada voted to incorporate as a city and the first officers were elected in March, 1999. The election on November 3, 1999 resulted in Marathon voting to incorporate and the residents of Key Largo saying no to incorporation.

Monroe County begins the new century with a strong economy based on tourism. The main employment is in the tourist industry followed by retail services, commercial fishing and government work. The county has the highest cost of living in the state with a per capita income that ranks fifth. (1999 Florida Statistical Abstract)



This WPA artwork created in the 1930s has been restored and now hangs in the Harvey Government Center at the historic Truman School in Key West.

office space. A new courthouse was added at Jackson Square in 1986. The Marathon Government Center was built in 1993. The increase in population led to an increase in crime creating a need for a new jail, which opened on Stock Island in February, 1994, followed by a new sheriff's office in 1995 at the same location. The county is remodeling the old Gato Cigar Factory on Simonton Street to replace the Stock Island Offices and searching for new space on Plantation Key.



Eddie's Fish Basket on Sugarloaf Key in the 1950s.



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Monroe County Administrator James Roberts is responsible for managing and carrying out the directives, policies and programs of the Board of County Commissioners and seeing that orders, resolutions, ordinances and regulations of the board are appropriately executed. The administrator reports to the board concerning the progress made and the implementation of services and programs and organizes the agenda for the county commission meetings.

One of the more important responsibilities is to prepare the annual budget for the board to consider, including the capital budget and the capital program. The administrator is responsible for seeing that county divisions and departments and other agencies comply with the provisions of the budget process and the commission's policies. The

administrator is responsible for developing a position classification system and maintaining centralized budgeting, purchasing, and personnel programs. The administrator is also responsible for the control of county property and construction projects and serves as a liaison between the county commission and other county officials. The administrator also serves as director of the division of management services.

The fiscal year 2000 budget is a response to the major issues facing the county including incorporations, full-cost allocation, maintenance of services, and loss of a variety of types of revenues because of incorporations. In addition, the budget addresses the major growth management responsibilities facing the county and the initial stages of a long-range wastewater and stormwater implementation program. The budget includes

maintenance and improvements on the quality and quantity of various daily services in the county while keeping tax implications within reason.

The same challenges as identified for the fiscal year 2000 budget will be there for the fiscal year 2001 budget. In addition, the county is facing the major challenges of downsizing the municipal service components of county government and responding to the calls for streamlining operations and more efficient and economical services. The county will continue with its major growth management activities.

Combining the positions of director of community services with the project manager's position eliminated one full-time position while maintaining high levels of productivity, a notable achievement in the county administrator's office.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

The county attorney's office provides quality and timely legal services to the Board of County Commissioners, the county administrator, county divisions and departments and other authorized county government organizations.

County Attorney James Hendrick and his assistants attend all Board of County Commissioner meetings, Tourist Development Council meetings, code enforcement board hearings, the contractor's examining board, the value adjustment board, and bid openings. The county attorney's office examines every contract entered into by the county for legal sufficiency as well as all resolutions and ordinances presented to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.



James T. Hendrick
County Attorney

Last year, the county attorney's office made significant strides toward reducing

the county's exposure to litigation and adverse judgments as evidenced by the reduced number of lawsuits filed against the county. The goals for the county attorney's office in the year 2000 include providing effective guidance in the transitional period of Marathon's incorporation.

The county attorney's office employs five attorneys and three paralegals whose average length of service is 10 years.

James T. Hendrick was admitted to the bar in 1972. He graduated magna cum laude from Canisius College and received his law degree from the University of Miami, where he graduated with honors. Hendrick was assistant state attorney, 16th circuit, and has been county attorney since 1995.



MANAGEMENT SERVICES

AIRPORTS

Airport services is responsible for the operation of Monroe County's two airport facilities — the Florida Keys Marathon Airport and Key West International Airport.

The department estimates that 550,000 passengers — 1,500 people per day — will pass through the Key West International Airport this year. During the height of tourist season, the airport's five regional carriers will have approximately 134 commercial flights in and out of Key West on a daily basis. In addition, the general aviation fleet will add 164 operations daily.

The Marathon terminal was completed and opened in February, 1995 but has the capacity to handle many more than the 48,000 passengers predicted for this year.

The airport system in the Keys is not paid for by ad valorem taxes. The great majority of the operations, totalling approximately \$6 million for next year, are paid with passenger facility charges.

In 1999, the airport services department completed the terminal renovation at the Key West facility and constructed the new federal inspection building. The majority of the multi-million dollar renovations at the Key West International Airport have been financed through grants from the Federal Aviation Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation. In the coming year, the airport will pay to the general fund an amount to cover indirect administrative costs, thereby helping to control ad valorem taxes.

Many projects are in the works for the year 2000 including completion of the new firefighting building, completion of a new employee parking lot, reconfiguration of the public parking lot, upgrading the aircraft ramp lighting system, and renovating the taxiway system and aircraft parking ramps.



VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Nearly 20,000 military veterans call the Florida Keys home. That means almost 20 percent of Monroe County's population has spent time serving their country. To serve them, Monroe County established the veterans' affairs department. The department acts as the advocate for the veteran and/or dependent for claims processing and other benefits to which they may be entitled.

Monroe County veterans' affairs department maintains offices in Plantation Key, Marathon and Key West.

In 1999, the U.S. Veterans' Affairs Outpatient Clinic opened in co-location with the Navy hospital. The Key Largo U.S. Veterans' Affairs Outpatient Clinic expanded from a temporary part-time clinic to a permanent full-time clinic. Two new vans also were added to provide transportation to Monroe County veterans, and two high-mileage vans were retired.

Next year, the department will offer regularly scheduled visits of medical specialists from Miami at both U.S. Veterans' Affairs Outpatient Clinics in Monroe County. An additional physician will be added to the Key West outpatient facility. Veterans' affairs also is looking forward to acquiring a 24-passenger van.

Last year, the department helped obtain a U.S. Department of Veterans homeless provider's grant totalling \$341,800, which resulted in the renovation of 1610 Truesdale Court, Poinciana Plaza, as transitional housing for homeless veterans.

MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

The office of management and budget (OMB) provides strategic planning and support to Monroe County government and promotes efficient management practices, sound financial budgeting, competitive procurement, efficient telephone, television and computer systems countywide.

OMB is responsible for preparing the county's annual \$240 million budget, which is divided into 56 different funds and 3,800 individual line items. During 1999, the office processed 8,375 purchase orders, handled 82 public bid openings, reviewed 277 contracts, solicited pricing for 650 requests, and placed 1,900 orders for the operating departments.

Last year, OMB's information systems managed a network of more than 400 computers in 24 office buildings spanning more than 100 miles of the Florida Keys and completed more than 3,000 computer work orders.

Throughout 1999, OMB televised 360 hours of live government meeting broadcasts,

Terminal renovation at the Key West International Airport was completed in 1999.



Left to right: John Carter, Senior Director of the Office of Management and Budget; Sheila Barker, Senior Director of Human Resources.

taped 360 hours of programming, provided 114 requests for tapes of government meetings, and made nearly 7,800 community bulletin board slide edits on Monroe County's television channel 16.

Y2K conversions were completed and the county entered the 21st century with no significant problems. 1999 saw the county continue its computer network modernization and expansion. The office expanded its coverage on local government television channel 16. OMB also negotiated a new county educational television channel.

The year 2000 holds many challenges for OMB including enhancing the county's internet web site, revising the county's budgets to account for incorporations, and developing the next five-year technology plan for computer networks and systems.

Last year, Monroe County was honored by the Government Finance Officers Association with a distinguished budget award.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The human resources department includes personnel, risk management, safety, employee benefits and worker's compensation. Among other things, the department is responsible for recruiting, training and developing a highly qualified, productive and responsive county staff that is capable of meeting and adapting to the needs of Monroe County.

PERSONNEL

The human resources personnel section saw many changes during 1999. The personnel section implemented a zero-tolerance, drug-free workplace and updated job descriptions for more than 250 county job titles. A years-of-service awards program for county employees also was continued. Last year, this section of the human resources department began a new evaluation system, reduced new employee orientation to a half day, and streamlined operations by providing on-line access to leave requests, direct deposit forms and the newsletter.

The personnel section streamlined operations and eliminated a position and divided responsibilities among current staff, saving the county \$21,000 a year plus benefits.

The greatest challenge for the year 2000 will be to reconcile the many changes in the county affected by incorporation with the least detrimental effects to both employees and residents of the county.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The risk management section handles all property, liability and physical damage insurances for the county. All contracts for Monroe County both internally and externally are reviewed, and claims against the county involving properties and vehicles, as well as any liability losses, are handled through this office. Risk management also monitors insurances for county contracts.

Last year, risk management successfully defended many lawsuits and appeals filed against Monroe County. Risk management will continue to reduce the number and severity of claims in the county by proper maintenance and frequent inspections of county properties. Last year, risk management reduced the general liability payout by 25 percent and also reduced auto liability by 41 percent.

The risk management staff is involved in continuing education through self-study and seminars. In the future, this section of human resources will continue to minimize the adverse effects of accidental losses upon the county by working with other divisions and their employees.

SAFETY OFFICE

The safety office works with all aspects of Monroe County government to provide a safe and healthy environment for county employees and the community by reducing the cost of accidents and liability with a professional safety program. It is the objective of the safety office to enforce all applicable OSHA laws, life safety codes, fire codes and laws of the state of Florida that relate to providing a safe environment. The safety office provides a safety and loss prevention inspection program of county property, develops training programs to improve the effectiveness of personnel toward providing a safe place for county employees to work, and provides safety and specialized training for employees who work in a hazardous work environment. Last year, the safety office reduced worker's compensation losses from \$724,000 to \$583,000.

The safety office coordinates sheltering of citizens in an emergency or disaster. The planning and coordination includes shelters for general population, persons with special needs and last resort refuges.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

There are 2,450 participants in the county's employee benefit program. The program provides medical, dental, vision,



The U.S. Veterans' Administration
received new vans in 1999.

pharmaceutical and employee assistance to 1,354 active employees, including employees of all the constitutional officers, 227 retirees and 871 dependents. A total of \$7,248,084 in claims were paid in the 1998/1999 benefit year.

The group insurance office maintains enrollments and provides assistance by maintaining constant communications with five payroll offices, eight human resource departments and five different program administrators.

The insurance office's greatest achievement for 1999 was implementing a new county commission policy that reduced a potential \$69 million liability for retiree group insurance benefits. In the year ahead, the office will work on continuing to address the remaining \$26 million liability in the retiree program.

Other challenges for the coming year include preparing the budget for fiscal year 2000-2001, implementing an enrollment database, updating the benefit plan document booklet, and revising the personnel policies and procedures sections including leave and group insurance coverage.

The office undertook a special project with the Keys Physician's Hospital Alliance to hold health fairs in three locations throughout the Keys. All employees were invited to participate.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

The worker's compensation section of human resources handles claims for all on-the-job injuries for the county's 1,900 employees and volunteers. Worker's compensation refers employees to medical care and advises them on claim processing, obtaining medication, and follow-up medical care.



Covered under the county's worker's compensation program are all of the constitutional officers and volunteers for Monroe County as well as employees of the Board of County Commissioners. Additionally, worker's compensation works in conjunction with the safety office to provide a safe work environment for all county employees.

The department's greatest achievement in 1999 was the reduction in projected claim reserves from \$1.2 million at the end of 1996 to \$902,840 as of September, 1999. Worker's compensation losses have also decreased from \$723,794 in 1995/1996 to \$583,196 in 1998/1999.

Challenges ahead for worker's compensation include putting managed care services out to bid in accordance with Florida statutes. If a new carrier wins the bid, all 1,900 employees and volunteers along with service providers must be educated about the county's new managed care arrangement.

The department will continue county office visits throughout the Keys to work with employees on worker's compensation issues during 2000.



**In 1999, Monroe County
received the Distinguished
Budget Presentation Award
from the Government Finance
Officers Association.**



PUBLIC SAFETY

The public safety division is comprised of emergency communications, emergency management, emergency medical services, the fire marshal, and fire/rescue departments. The public safety division provides programs and services throughout Monroe County directly and in coordination with the various municipalities.

Additionally, the public safety director serves as administrative liaison with the Upper Keys health care (trauma) taxing district and the medical examiner's office.

Monroe County has 10 areas in which emergency, fire/rescue, and EMS responders are located. These include stations at Stock Island, Big Coppitt, Sugarloaf, Cudjoe Key, Big Pine Key, Marathon, Conch Key, Layton, Tavernier, and Key Largo. In total, about 200 firefighters serve as volunteers and form the hub of the fire/rescue program.

In 1999, fire/rescue responded to 694 fire calls in the Lower Keys, 629 calls in the Middle Keys and 535 calls in the Upper Keys for a total of 1,858 calls countywide. Ambulances were dispatched on 1,217 calls in the Lower Keys, 1,141 calls in the Middle Keys and 2,071 calls in the Upper Keys for a total of 4,429 calls to all of Monroe County.

Monroe County established and implemented combined volunteer and paid emergency services in the Florida Keys by training and certifying many of its career emergency medical technicians and paramedics also as firefighters. Those individuals now function in a dual capacity in both emergency medical services and fire rescue, thus enhancing emergency services overall. There are 58 emergency medical services



Reggie Paros
Division Director, Public Safety

professionals with 42 cross-trained as certified firefighters.

Last year, Monroe County established a length-of-service awards program for its volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel.

Monroe County was recently awarded the National Association of Counties Achievement Award for the Offshore Rescue Partnership Program. The program is a consortium of local, county, state and federal agencies working together to identify and implement continuing improvements to offshore emergency response in the Florida Keys. The agencies participating in this program include Monroe County public

safety, emergency medical services, fire rescue, emergency management, fire marshal and emergency communications, volunteer fire departments, Monroe County Sheriff's Department, U.S. Coast Guard and auxiliary, BellSouth, Florida Marine Patrol and Naval Air Station Key West.

The greatest challenge for 2000 will be to maintain a smooth transition of emergency services between Monroe County and newly formed municipal governments. This will ensure that the quality of emergency services available to our residents and visitors is maintained as the tax base of the county changes.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Florida Keys are the most hurricane prone area in the continental United States. Hurricanes are just one disaster the county's office of emergency management must be prepared to handle.

The office of emergency management serves as the central

clearing house for all public information in the event of any emergency and as the coordinating unit for all disaster control and response programs from an accident at Turkey Point nuclear power plant to a tropical storm.

Last year, the department successfully coordinated its

Left to right:
Norm Leggett,
Senior Director of
Communications;
Teresa Gorentz,
EMS Chief;
Joe London,
Fire Marshal;
William Wagner,
Emergency
Management Senior
Director;
Ross Willman,
Fire/Rescue Acting
Senior Director.





Fire/rescue personnel training at Crawl Key.

response to category four Hurricane Floyd with few problems, Tropical Storm Harvey with no problems, and category one Hurricane Irene with no loss of life and few problems. The department has also established an excellent partnership with the Tourist Development Council's public relations agency to inform our tourist industry and business community in the case of an emergency.

Last year, the department participated in the required FEMA evaluation at Turkey Point nuclear power plant, receiving an excellent review and the annual Florida Division of Emergency Management statewide hurricane exercise.

Emergency management's comprehensive emergency plan received approval. Future projects include a dedicated emergency operations center and continuing to address the critical public safety issues in the US1 South Project. Emergency management is working with many agencies to complete an evacuation study, which includes a new storm surge model for Florida Bay.

During 2000, the department will work with new personnel within city, county, and state agencies.

FIRE/RESCUE

The Monroe County fire/rescue office coordinates the management of 10 fire stations throughout Monroe County. The fire/rescue department ensures the safety and well being of all residents and visitors to Monroe County. The department strives to control the overall costs of fire/rescue service in Monroe County, while at the same time providing the highest possible quality of service.

The fire/rescue department experienced many changes this past year. To keep firefighters currently trained, the county opened a fire training facility on Crawl Key. For the first time, a minimum standards certification class began and fire and emergency medical services were combined as a paid and volunteer system. Firefighters no longer had to go to mainland Florida for training, thereby reducing costs and disruptions to personal lives. Fire/rescue saw the first graduating class of the Monroe County Fire Academy, with 27 out of 30 students becoming certified firefighters. Currently, paid personnel are at the following stations: Stock Island, Big Coppitt, Cudjoe, Big Pine, Marathon (EMS only), Conch Key and Tavernier. The second fire academy class will graduate during 2000.

FIRE MARSHAL

The Monroe County fire marshal's office has been in existence since 1985. Under state mandate, the office is responsible for fire investigations, hazardous material incident response and coordination, fire safety plan review, enforcement of fire safety codes, and performance of periodic fire safety



inspections. In an average year, the county fire marshal conducts 1,561 fire safety inspections, reviews 262 plans and conducts 85 fire investigations.

The fire marshal's office has always maintained an open-door policy for property owners, contractors, architects, and engineers to discuss fire safety requirements and alternative solutions for fire prevention. The office educates the public regarding fire safety issues on a daily basis, explaining fire safety codes, the insurance benefits of installing fire protection systems, fireworks safety and life safety issues.

A post-storm hazardous debris inspection program of some 900 sites, mainly in the Lower Keys, began immediately after Hurricane Georges and Tropical Storm Mitch and was completed in 1999. Detailed inspections of each site were required by FEMA to qualify Monroe County for reimbursement of debris removal expenses. This involved ongoing coordination with property owners and Solid Waste Management and its subcontractors.

Federal and state mandates require facilities with storage of certain hazardous materials to be inspected and analyzed every two years. The fire marshal's office provides a detailed analysis including site diagrams, inventories and emergency response procedures. The fire marshal received grant funding for training and equipment related to hazardous materials for completing inspections in 1999.



Monroe County Emergency Medical Services ambulance.

Last year, the fire marshal designed a fire safety training program and presented it to county employees at various locations.

During 2000, the fire marshal will develop a long-range hazardous materials response plan that will include training, equipment and alternative funding sources. The office will complete a program that will network Monroe County's fire stations to provide remote access to fire incident reports on a daily basis and will develop a computer database to include fire protection systems information for commercial occupancies throughout the county.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

The emergency communications department coordinates the daily operation and integration of the numerous communications networks of the county, including emergency two-way radio, telephone, data and television systems.

Because of its geography, Monroe County has one of the most expansive communications systems in any county of comparable size. For example, the communications department maintains equipment in 56 various sites from Ocean Reef to Key West. There are 22 separate communication systems throughout the county supporting more than 500 mobile radios, 450 hand-held radios and 525 emergency pagers. Monroe County's communications equipment is valued at \$6.5 million.

The emergency communications department also performs 911 coordination, equipment purchasing and maintenance, airport communications, emergency operations center communications, coordination and support functions, and a multitude of various electronic services throughout the county.

In 1999, the department completed the installation of one of the most progressive and advanced 911 systems within the country. The new Monroe County 911 system incorporates the most advanced features and encompasses design improvements that were suggested by this department, which are a first in 911

system design.

The past year saw the replacement of a 20-year-old tower at the Key West courthouse. The new tower meets the newer building codes. The replacement tower, valued at \$125,000, was purchased at no cost to the Monroe County taxpayer.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Monroe County emergency medical services (EMS) responds to all reported emergencies within a service area to help residents and visitors limit loss of life and property with the utmost regard for safety. Monroe County EMS employees are dual certified as paramedic or emergency medical technicians (EMT), and as state certified firefighters. In an emergency, both pre-hospital emergency medical services and fire service duties are provided.

EMS employs 42 uniformed and six administrative employees. The service area for EMS includes the west end of Cow Key Channel at approximately mile marker four through Tavernier, approximately mile marker 95, excluding the Village of Islamorada. During fiscal year 1999, EMS responded to 3,829 calls.

More than 80 percent of EMS field personnel and supervisors completed Florida firefighter certification in 1999, making it the largest group of certified firefighters in Monroe County. The challenge is to integrate their work day with that of the volunteer fire departments and to maximize public safety.

The incorporation of Marathon and potential incorporations of Big Pine and the Lower Keys pose the greatest challenge to providing effective, economical EMS services in the future.

TRAUMA MANAGEMENT

Voters living between the east end of the Long Key Bridge north to the county line (excluding portions of mainland Monroe County) established the Upper Keys health care taxing district in 1988. The primary purpose of the trauma district is to assure rapid access and transport of trauma victims with potentially life-threatening injuries to a state-approved level-one trauma center. Over the last 10 years, approximately 260 patients have been transported to a trauma center in Miami.

Under the leadership of a new director, trauma management will continue to assure access to critical care at the appropriate trauma center within the time frame established by the American College of Surgeons Committee.

The department also will be implementing programs for public education on the prevention of trauma and will continue pursuing educational opportunities for the EMS and hospital staff.



PUBLIC WORKS

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

The facilities maintenance department is responsible for maintaining more than 100 county buildings and facilities totaling over one million square feet and more than two dozen parks and beaches. The department employs more than 100 employees.

In 1999, facilities maintenance assisted with the design and development of the Key Largo Community Park and Marathon Community Park in coordination with the parks and recreation advisory board and the public input process. The department also completed various renovation projects such as the state attorney's office and public defender's office in Marathon. The facilities maintenance department also completed the renovation of the library and Board of County Commissioners meeting room in Key Largo.

Restoring government services at county facilities and parks and beaches to a usable state after Hurricane Georges, Tropical Storm Mitch, and Hurricane Irene continues as an ongoing project.

During 2000, facilities maintenance will continue to streamline the department and provide cost-efficient services to county facilities, parks and beaches in light of the incorporation of Marathon. The department will continue implementing a new county work order system that will obtain detailed reporting data to be used for cost accounting measures.



Dent Pierce
Division Director, Public Works

receive services and benefits from fleet management are the Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Marine Patrol, Florida Park Patrol, Monroe County School Board and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office.

During the aftermath of Hurricane Georges, Irene and other tropical storms the department's mechanics were quickly mobilized to ensure that generators at all essential county facilities were fueled, running and providing emergency power 24 hours a day until electricity was restored.

At the county's three automated fueling sites, approximately 350,000 gallons of gasoline and diesel are dispensed annually. The fueling sites are in operation 24 hours a day, 365 days per year and are equipped

with emergency generators. During any loss of electrical power, whether minor power outage or natural disaster, fuel is available to the departments and agencies served.

Since the department was established, fleet management has maintained a perfect record of no vehicle accidents directly related to lack of maintenance, carelessness or poor work quality.

In 1999, the department implemented a new state-of-the-art fleet management computer system, which tracks and maintains records on all units serviced. Additionally, the county's ten-year-old fueling facilities were upgraded to include a new state-of-the-art fuel tracking system.

At the beginning of each budget year, fleet management either goes out for competitive bids or purchases vehicles and

FLEET MANAGEMENT

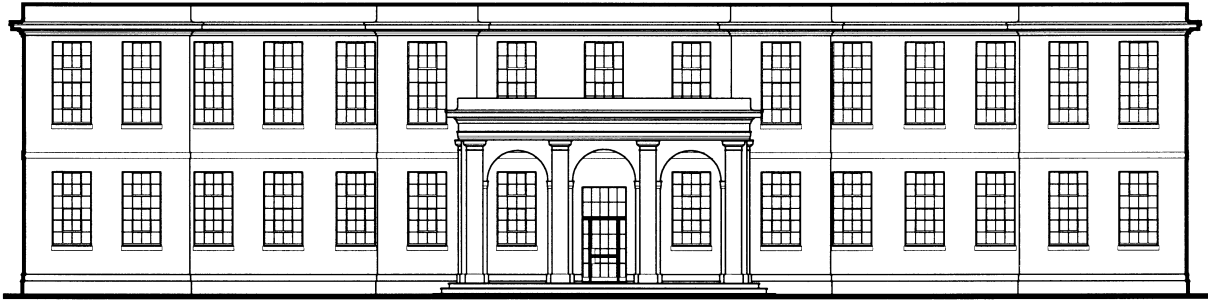
The fleet management department is responsible for maintenance, safety inspections, repairs and fueling of approximately 750 units, which includes small vehicles and trucks, rolling equipment and emergency generators. Services are rendered from three full-service garages located in Key West, Marathon and Plantation Key.

Other government agencies that presently



Left to right:

Joseph Medallion, Director of Roads and Bridges;
Carlos Zarate, Senior Director of Facilities Maintenance;
Roy Sanchez, Director of Fleet Management;
David Koppel, Monroe County Engineer.



The Gato Building on Simonton Street in Key West will be the new home of Monroe County offices upon completion.

other rolling equipment from multiple government contracts saving the county thousands of dollars as compared to retail prices paid by consumers.

Challenges for the year ahead include maintaining all equipment in a safe operating condition, attracting qualified employees and continuing to improve overall efficiency.

ROADS AND BRIDGES

The roads and bridges department provides residents and tourists with a safe and visually appealing right-of-way for travel, through such means as brush cutting, road signage, resurfacing, and storm drainage maintenance. The department maintains more than 460 miles of existing roads and 37 bridges. In conjunction with county roadways, the department also services nearly 35 miles of bike paths. Funding for this

department and its projects is mostly covered by Florida state fuel taxes.

1999 saw the road and bridges department complete storm clean-up, right-of-way repairs and additional storm related projects as a result of Hurricanes Irene and Floyd and Tropical Storm Harvey. Last year, the department introduced a new work order software system to properly track data relating to cost and work performed.

In the year 2000, the department will face new challenges created by incorporation such as a decreasing workforce while continuing to look for more ways to perform all duties more efficiently.

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

The engineering department is responsible for the county's capital improvements plan and seven-year road and bike path plan. The engineering department performs in-house design services and surveying and issues right-of-way and driveway permits. Assisting the building department by reviewing plans for stormwater ordinance compliance is another important function.

Kids of all ages now enjoy the new 14-acre Key Largo community park the department designed and constructed last year, a culmination of two years of work with the parks and recreation advisory board and the public.

Projects underway include the Marathon Community Park, the Monroe County Courthouse, the Judicial Building, the Gato Building and the Palm Avenue bicycle path.

The engineering department continues to save the taxpayers of Monroe County in excess of \$1 million each year by performing surveying, design and construction administrative services in-house, rather than using a private firm.

Approximately 100 different projects are in various phases of development by engineering staff. Projects range from roads and bike paths to parks and court facilities and costs from as little as a few thousand dollars to as high as several million dollars.



Road repair on Boca Chica Road, the final Hurricane Georges road repair project in the Keys.



SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT



Clark Lake
Division Director,
Solid Waste Management

The solid waste management division is an enterprise fund with an annual budget of \$16.9 million that ensures

Monroe County residents and businesses are provided with environmentally correct and cost-effective solid waste collection, recycling and disposal services. Residential solid waste assessment, commercial tipping fees and state grants fund the solid waste division.

Four private franchise operators collect residential and commercial solid waste, recyclables and horticultural waste. Solid waste operates transfer stations at Cudjoe Key, Long Key, and Key Largo where solid waste and recyclables are processed before transfer to Broward County for final marketing and disposal. Monroe County does not have any active solid waste landfills. Approximately 85,000 tons of non-storm solid waste



Hurricane Georges generated 1.25 million cubic yards of debris.

Photo courtesy of Rob O'Neal

and horticultural waste were delivered to the transfer stations. Approximately 29,000 tons or 30 percent were recycled.

The division also operates septic and household hazardous waste collection facilities. Pollution control is responsible for illegal dumping clean-up in the county.

In 1999, solid waste management removed remaining debris from Hurricane Georges and Tropical Storm Mitch. The storms generated 1.25 million cubic yards of debris, at a total clean-up cost of \$28 million.

This year the department looks forward to expanding solid waste education and restoring the solid waste fund, which was negatively impacted by last year's storm clean-up expenses.



Left to right: Jack Julien, Solid Waste Superintendent;
Mike Lawn, Assistant Director, Solid Waste.



Recycling at the Cudjoe Key transfer station.



GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The growth management division through its five departments develops and implements the county's comprehensive land use plan, land development regulations, and building code and has staff located in Stock Island, Marathon and Plantation Key.

After many years of false starts and delays, the division initiated a program last year to replace the first 350 cesspools and unknown on-site wastewater treatment systems that are not anticipated to be served by central or community sewerage systems by the year 2010, as required by the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan. A priority for 2000 is to secure federal and state grants to defray a substantial portion of the property owner's costs to replace illegal and substandard wastewater systems.

This year the growth management division will make the permitting system more user friendly, efficient and responsive to the needs of county citizens.

Growth management will assist the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority in initiating the design and construction of central sewerage systems in Key Largo, the Bay Point subdivision, Big Coppitt, and Conch Key. Another goal of the division is to restructure the division's staff and programs to address changing demands on its services as a result of incorporations. The division is currently planning to initiate a program to provide electronic storage and retrieval of all division permitting, development, and code enforcement records.



Tim McGarry
Division Director,
Growth Management

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The code enforcement department has three offices serving Monroe County at Stock Island, Marathon, and Plantation Key.

Last year, the department opened 4,179 new cases, performed 13,100 inspections, collected \$109,706 in fees and issued 122 civil citations. The department dealt with almost 5,000 cases of vacation rental ordinance violations. Fees collected represent an increase of more than 50 percent from 1998.

Last year, the department issued more than 800 notices for violation of the cesspit replacement ordinance in a two-day period.

Because of Islamorada and Marathon's incorporations, code enforcement redistributed its services.

This year, the department plans to modernize its complaint process so that citizens can file a code violation complaint through the internet. Code enforcement also will complete its transition to an automated system of case development, code violation notices and special master hearings. The department looks forward to implementing a neighborhood and community-based code enforcement policy.

BUILDING

During fiscal year 1998/1999, the building department issued 14,000 building permits, many of these storm related. Last year, the department successfully converted 11-year-old

records from a very antiquated system to a modern permitting system and created and implemented a postcard permitting system for air conditioning contractors.

The department plans to adopt and implement a post-disaster redevelopment plan in 2000, as well as streamline the permitting system and fully institute the walk-through permitting system.



Left to right:

Ralph Goudy, Acting Director of Environmental Resources; George Garrett, Director of Marine Resources; Joe Paskali, Acting Building Official. *Not pictured:* Tom Simmons, Director of Code Enforcement; Marlene Conaway, Director of Planning.



PLANNING

The department of planning reviews and plans growth in Monroe County in accordance with the Monroe County 2010 plan to promote orderly development, to enhance safety and welfare and preserve the character of the community. Last year, the department reviewed plans for 69 major developments and responded to thousands of citizen inquiries about development potential and opportunities on private properties.

Working with the planning commission and the Board of County Commissioners, the department developed and coordinated the adoption of 20 future land use and zoning map amendments and the historic preservation, outdoor lighting, tower, affordable housing and rate of growth ordinance amendments.

Last year, the planning department initiated the Livable CommuniKeys Program. The CommuniKeys Program is a planning effort that will determine the needs of the individual Keys and result in master plans for these communities. The initial effort will focus on Big Pine and No Name Keys and Key Largo. This program will intensively involve citizens and property owners in development of these plans with technical assistance from the county planning department and the Island Planning Team.

Using \$180,000 of grant money, the department has been able to develop a master plan to manage the Heritage Bicycle Trail and to pursue the necessary \$13 million to continue the trail's design and construction.

The department provided technical assistance on affordable housing and tourism planning initiatives, the Big Pine and No Name Habitat Conservation Plan coordinating committee, the Florida Keys Carrying Capacity Study and the Hurricane Evacuation Model Re-run.

This year the department will begin a counter permitting process that will reduce review and processing time for those permits that have minimal to no impact on the comprehensive plan and environmental resources.

The department also looks forward to dividing staff into multi-disciplinary planning teams to coordinate community and environmental planning, projects, studies, and development reviews. The planning department will take measures to reduce conflicts with the 2010 comprehensive plan, streamline procedures for permit review, eliminate need for interpretations of language, and address the countywide needs for quality redevelopment.

Utilizing and expanding the county's global information systems capabilities, the department will be able to prepare maps and visual representations, perform spatial analyses, and generate planning reports.

MARINE RESOURCES

With two offices located in Marathon and Stock Island, the department of marine resources oversees comprehensive plan projects such as the wastewater and stormwater master plans, marine resource protection through the derelict vessel removal and channel marking programs, the marine facilities survey and the boaters guide. The department provides services and benefits to the entire Florida Keys, including incorporated cities.

Last year, the department installed many new channel markers and idle speed regulatory zones and removed derelict vessels, making the Keys a safer and more pleasant place to go boating and sightseeing. The department oversees more than \$3 million in grant funds. In addition, the department monitored three grants: a channel marking grant for \$52,000; a marine wastewater pump-out facilities grant for \$50,000; and a boaters guide grant for slightly more than \$32,000.

As a result of two hurricanes in the last two years, the department reported and repaired numerous damaged channel markers and removed sunken or damaged vessels, while reimbursing all costs through FEMA.

The department is completing the wastewater master plan after just more than two years. The plan is a comprehensive assessment of the



Site of the future
Marathon Park and Marina.



Coco Plum Beach.

wastewater needs designed to meet the requirements of the comprehensive plan and state laws. The wastewater master plan provides recommendations for needed wastewater improvements, which ultimately will improve wastewater collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater.

The stormwater master plan currently underway will make assessments of current stormwater practices within the county and provide recommendations for necessary changes or improvements. This will improve the water quality associated with what appears to threaten or permanently damage nearshore and offshore communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The environmental resources department serves Monroe County from offices located in Plantation Key and Marathon. The department reviews and inspects residential and commercial development to ensure compliance with the environmental regulations. In 1999, 1,004 permits were issued through the environmental resources department and the department performed 1,838 site visits.

Last year, the department completed the multi-year, multi-agency advantage identification of wetlands program, which included identifying and mapping Monroe County wetlands, developing a wetland evaluation index, and formulating and implementing development regulations within disturbed wetlands. As a result, many property owners within the county whose parcels were rendered non-developable by the comprehensive plan can now develop their properties.

In 1999, environmental resources designed and coordinated beach dune stabilization with native beach vegetation and installed turtle-friendly lighting at Sombrero Beach following Hurricane Georges. The department also secured a Florida Department of Environmental Protection grant for exotic tree removal at Coco Plum Beach, reducing future beach erosion and enhancing the beach for turtle nesting activity.

The biological staff participates in the statewide stranding



network coordinated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the technical coordinating committee of the Big Pine Habitat Conservation Plan, the Florida Keys Invasive Exotic Task Force, and the Sanitary Wastewater Master Plan Technical Advisory Committee. The department is also actively involved in the county's stormwater planning, shoreline issues, threatened and endangered species initiatives and land conservation.

This year the department will work toward the removal of Monroe County's designation as an area of critical concern by implementing a variety of environmental programs and studies.



Marathon Government Center.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

The community services division is responsible for the social services, extension services, and library services departments. The community services division acts as an umbrella to provide direct services to the population of Monroe County. All the services provided by the division are instrumental in providing a community quality of life.

The community services director also serves as the county project manager, overseeing such projects as the \$11 million canal cleaning program and other programs related to hurricane recovery efforts for reimbursement or infrastructure repair or replenishment.



Jim Malloch
Community Services Division
Director/County Project Manager

EXTENSION SERVICE

The Monroe County Board of County Commissioners, the University of Florida and U.S. Department of Agriculture have shared a productive partnership through the cooperative extension service for 28 years. The primary mission of the cooperative extension service is to disseminate and encourage the application of research-based knowledge through such programs as the Marine Sea Grant program, Florida Yards and Neighborhoods, 4-H, the Florida Bay Education Project, recycling, family nutrition and horticulture. In 1999, extension services distributed 19,252 bulletins, submitted 222 mass media

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Canal Clean-up

The Monroe County canal clean-up project is a cooperative effort between Monroe County, the state of Florida Department of Community Affairs, the federal government's Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the South Florida Resource Conservation and Development Council.

The canal clean-up project was started after Hurricane Georges passed directly over the Florida Keys depositing tons of trees and materials in the 108 miles of canals located from mile marker 2 in Key West (Riviera Canal) to mile marker 107 in Key Largo (Lake Surprise).

Sediment deposits that were a direct effect of the results of three natural disasters will be cleaned or removed



upon completion of the project. Monroe County was required to underwrite and pay for only 10 percent of the total \$11 million cost with an average of every county dollar spent matched by \$9 from the state and federal governments.

The majority of all canal cleaning contracts went to local firms who hired local subcontractors and workers, which meant that the \$11 million of funding remains in Monroe County to support the local economy. In addition, the many skills and methodologies perfected in the two years of the canal clean-up project will be there ready for use by local contractors should another similar disaster strike Monroe County in the future.

The result of the canal clean-up project is a county canal system that is in the best condition in its history because of the cooperative efforts among county, state and federal government and Monroe County citizens.



Above left: Big Pine Library. Above right: Key Largo Public Library.

articles, and maintained 34,000 client contacts.

Last year saw the inaugural Tropical Fruit Fiesta at Bayview Park, which provided residents with information and access to the various tropical fruits available in the Keys.

The department received a \$30,000 grant from the University of Florida for a Florida Yards and Neighborhoods program to educate residents on how to create and maintain attractive, low-maintenance, healthy landscapes that conserve and protect Florida Keys' natural resources.

The department also received a \$180,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration coastal ocean program and the Florida Marine Research Institute to conduct a Florida Bay education and outreach program to educate residents about Florida Bay research and restoration efforts.

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary awarded the county a \$20,000 grant to conduct the lobster sentinel fisheries monitoring program, which will evaluate the effectiveness of the Western Sambos ecological reserve on enhancing the local lobster population.

This year, extension services plans to hold the second annual Tropical Fruit Fiesta. The department will continue the master gardener program and an educational demonstration garden that educates residents about the Keys unique plant environment.

LIBRARIES

The Monroe County library system started out as a library association in Key West in the 1880s and has grown to a countywide system of five branches located in Key Largo,

Islamorada, Marathon, Big Pine Key and Key West. The library system has 35,000 registered borrowers and had a circulation last year of more than 320,000 items. More than 2,000 meetings and programs were conducted in the branches' meeting rooms in the past year, with nearly 49,000 attendees.

Monroe County's libraries offer information and entertainment covering a wide range of interests through an increasingly wide variety of media from traditional books and magazines to compact discs. Each branch receives monetary and volunteer support from local Friends of the Library groups. Last year alone, volunteers contributed almost 6,000 hours.

In 1999, the Monroe County Library System received a \$100,000 grant to introduce internet access for library patrons from Key Largo to Key West. By the end of the year, more than two dozen computers were available for public access.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Monroe County social services provides support to elderly,



*Left to right: Norma Kula, Director of Libraries;
Doug Gregory, Director of Extension Services.*

Not pictured: Louis LaTorre, Director of Social Services.



Big Pine Senior Center.

disabled, and indigent clients with information and referrals to other agencies through its programs, including transportation, in-home services, Bayshore Manor, the nutrition program, the senior employment program, and the welfare program. The goal of these programs is to assist individuals in living dignified and reasonably independent lives. Funds come from county taxpayers and federal and state sources such as grants.

The senior community services employment program enrolled 52 participants throughout the year, with placement of 11 enrollees in the public sector after completion of training.

The transportation program provides 40,000 trips annually to an excess of 1,800 clients.

Case management, the core of social services, includes arranging and coordinating appropriate community-based services for eligible clients. The welfare program provided services to 1,700 clients last year.

In-home services offers in-home support to impaired elderly persons over the age of 60 and disabled adults ages 18-59 who are residents of Monroe County. The program offers an alternative to nursing home placement. In-home services provided services to 400 clients last year, with an overall total of 73,000 service units to these clients.

The nutrition program provided meals to 475 clients per year for a total of more than 42,000 meals. The nutrition program also offers home-delivered meals for disabled adults who are homebound.

Social services provides chore services such as seasonal cleaning, essential errands, yard work, lifting and moving, simple household repairs, pest control, and household maintenance for eligible persons who are unable to do these

tasks for themselves.

The homemaking service assists with home management duties including housekeeping, meal planning and preparation, shopping assistance, and routine household activities by a trained homemaker.

Personal care service provides assistance to the functionally impaired elderly or disabled person with bathing, dressing, ambulation, housekeeping, supervision, emotional security, eating, and assistance with securing health care from appropriate sources. This service

does not include medical services.

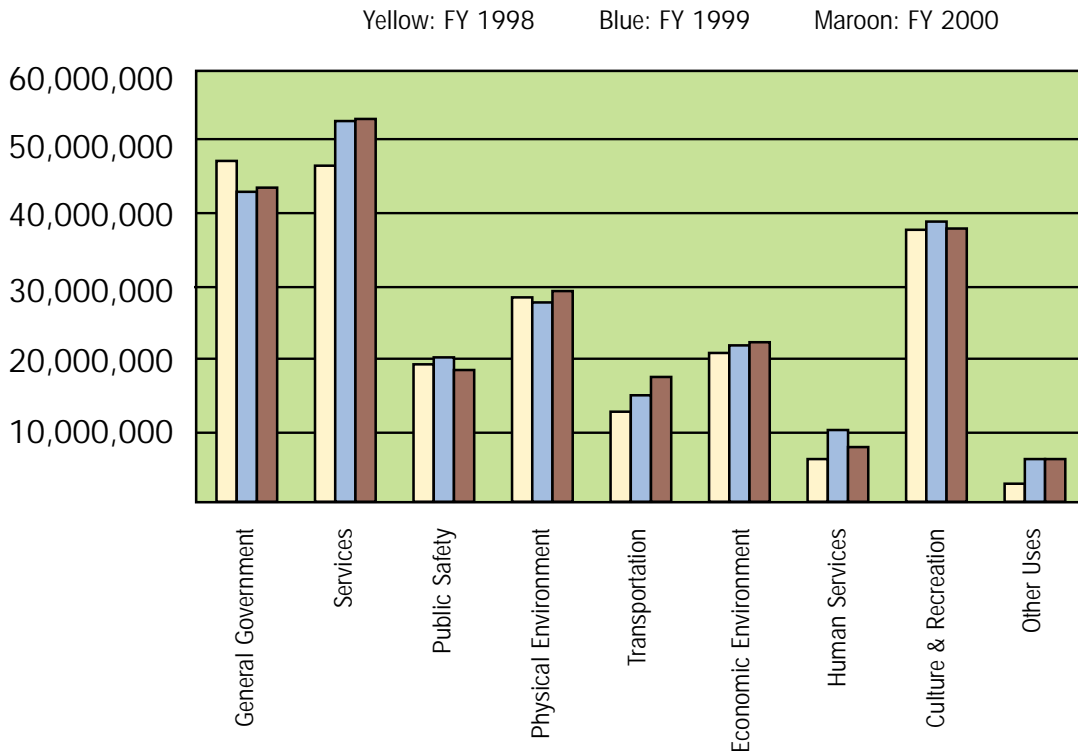
Social Service also provides respite care, which is a relief or rest from the constant and continued supervision, companionship, therapeutic and personal care of a functionally impaired older person for a specified period of time. Bayshore Manor cared for 18 elders in the daytime respite program, six elders in the short-term admission respite program and 19 full-time resident elders.



Marathon Library.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY



The Board of County Commissioners adopted an annual operating and capital budget for fiscal year 2000 based on year-long planning and observation throughout 1999, with the ultimate goal of reducing costs and increasing services.

Monroe County serves a dual role in that it provides countywide services, such as social services, to all residents and municipal-type services, such as planning and emergency medical services, to the unincorporated areas. Revenues are collected from property taxes, grants and other revenue sources.

One of the greatest effects on the fiscal year 2000 budget is a loss of funds of various kinds and a decrease in the tax base with the recent incorporation of the City of Marathon and the Village of Islamorada in addition to the already incorporated cities of Key West, Layton and Key Colony Beach.

Monroe County receives much of its revenue from property taxes, also known as the ad valorem tax. Other revenue streams include licenses and permits, federal and state sources, service charges, fines and forfeitures, grants, rents and interest.

Unlike the federal government, Florida law states that a

county must have a balanced budget. Therefore, Monroe County has no budget deficit. The county is continuously balancing cost control with improving services for citizens.

The county is committed to reducing the size of its workforce and is initiating the first steps of an attrition program. At the same time, service increases are expected this year in parks and recreation, libraries, code enforcement, airport operations, and fire/rescue and emergency medical services.

Monroe County has overcome its financial problems from years ago and operates with greater efficiency than ever before. The total budget for 2000 is only 0.1 percent higher at \$241,570,800 than 1999's budget of \$241,410,960.

The county's budget is subdivided into "funds." Fund accounting allows a government to budget and account for funds restricted by law or policy. These funds allow the county to segregate certain revenues and then account for expenditures from these revenues. The county budget has 56 funds. All must balance and are separately monitored. The Monroe County budget, which is adopted each year by the Board of County

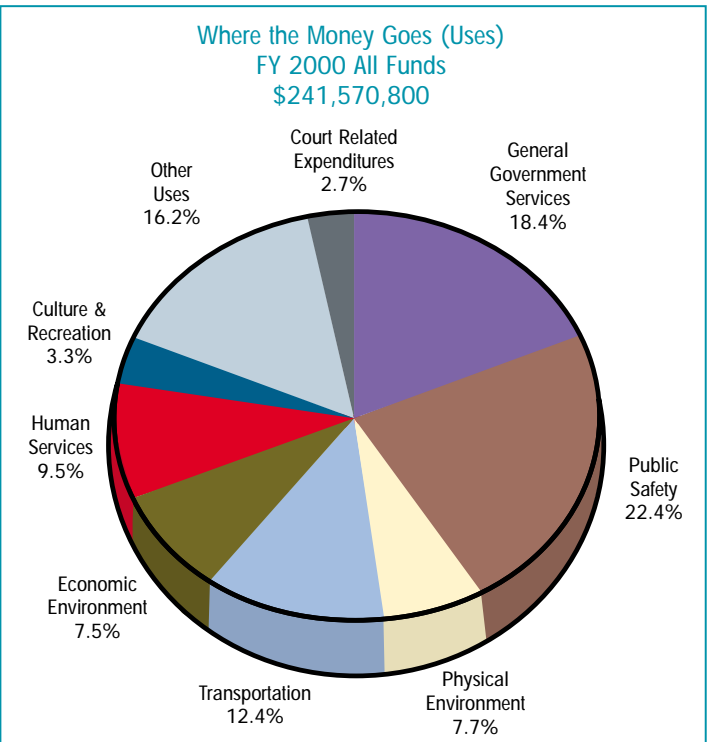
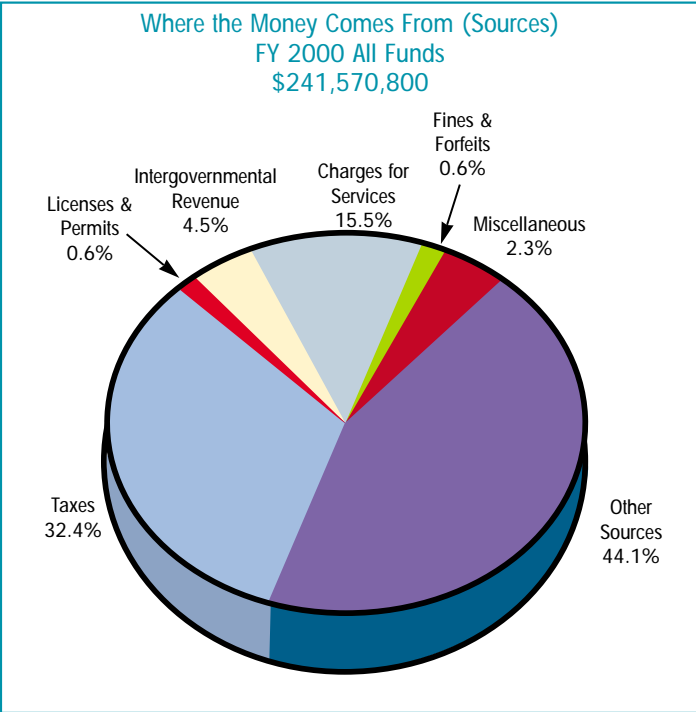


Commissioners, is actually the total of the separate funds or accounts. The majority of the funds for fiscal year 2000 are either at, below, or only moderately higher than in 1999.

Total revenue impacts show that the general fund has increased non-ad valorem revenues of more than \$3 million mostly as a result of cost allocation. Other funds such as law enforcement also have improved.

Monroe County's budget for fiscal year 2000 addresses several timely issues, including incorporation, implementing a cost allocation program and funding hurricane clean-up costs. But, more than anything, the budget represents a commitment to creating a less expensive government and at the same time offering more and better services.

Monroe County follows national accounting standards, state of Florida budgeting standards, federal and state grant requirements and local budgeting standards.



Monroe County budget information
is also available on the county's web site:
www.co.monroe.fl.us
under
"Introduction to County Budgeting"

CREDITS

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*Special thanks to the Monroe County division
and department heads and their staffs for
invaluable input to this project.*



Monroe County Snapshots



Clockwise from top left:

Named as 1999 Employees of the Year were Jennifer Hill, Assistant Director, Office of Management and Budget, and Tom Hambright, County Historian; Higgs Beach in Key West; Anne Layton Rice, Assistant Director of Libraries and Valerie Moore, Business Manager at the Key West Library; Mayor Shirley Freeman with firefighters Wally Romero and Bill Surina; The Harvey Government Center.



Clockwise from top left:
This puppy awaits adoption at the Key West animal shelter;
Friendship Park in Key Largo; Plantation Key Government Center;
Key Largo Park; Harry Harris Park and Beach.

**To reach the main county switchboard, dial:**

Key West	Marathon	Plantation
294-4641	743-0079	852-1469

Mayor Shirley Freeman	292-3430
Commissioner Wilhelmina Harvey	292-3440
Commissioner George Neugent	292-4512
Commissioner Mary Key Reich	852-7175
Commissioner Nora Williams	289-6000
County Administrator James L. Roberts	292-4441
Building	
Key West	292-4490
Marathon	289-2501
Plantation	852-7100
Code Enforcement	
Key West	292-4497
Marathon	289-2556
Plantation	852-7135
County Attorney	292-3470
Communications	289-6035
Community Services Division	292-4500
Emergency Medical Services	
Key Largo	451-2766
Marathon	289-6210
Emergency Management	289-6018
Engineering	
Key West	292-4426
Marathon	289-6074
Environmental Resources	
Marathon	289-2502
Plantation	853-7327
Extension Services	
Key West	292-4501
Plantation	853-3592
Facilities Maintenance	
Key West	292-4431
Marathon	289-6036
Plantation	852-7161
Fire Marshal	289-6010
Fleet Management	
Key West	292-3571
Marathon	289-6062
Plantation	852-7158
Grants Management	292-4474
Growth Management Division	289-2500
Human Resources	292-4537
Information Systems	295-5110
Land Authority	
Key West	295-5180
Marathon	289-6022
Plantation	852-7171
Library Services	
Big Pine	289-6303
Islamorada	852-7163
Key Largo	852-7164
Key West	292-3595
Marathon	289-6098

Management and Budget	292-4470
Marine Resources	
Key West	292-4511
Marathon	289-2504
Planning and Development	
Marathon	289-2500
Plantation	852-7100
Public Safety Division	289-6002
Public Works Division	
Key West	292-4560
Marathon	289-6036
Plantation	852-7161
Purchasing	292-4465
Recycling	292-4433
Transfer Stations:	
Cudjoe/Hazardous Waste	295-4314
Long Key	289-6307
Key Largo	853-7306
Risk Management	292-4542
Roads and Bridges	
Key West	295-5193
Card Sound Toll Bridge	247-3707
Marathon	289-6036
Plantation	852-7161
Safety Department	292-4456
Sheriff's Department	
Key West	296-2424
Cudjoe	745-3184
Plantation	853-3211
Social Services	292-4573
Solid Waste Management Division	292-4432
Tourist Development Council	292-3523
Trauma Office / Upper Keys	451-2766
Veterans' Affairs	
Key West	295-5150
Marathon	289-6009
Plantation	852-7104
Clerk of the Court	
Civil Division	295-3458
Criminal Division / Felony	292-3569
Finance	292-3560
Internal Audit Department	292-3591
Jury Clerk	292-3442
Juvenile	292-3569
Recording Division	292-3540
Traffic / Misdemeanor	292-3545
Judicial	
Court Administrator	292-3423
Legal Services	292-3566
Pre-Trial Services	292-3469
Public Defender	292-3585
State Attorney	292-3400
Property Appraiser	
City Appraisal	292-3522
Lower Keys	292-3413
Personal Property	292-3504
Real Estate	292-3414
Supervisor of Elections	292-3416
Tax Collector	295-5000